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ABSTRACT

The idea that professional schools represent a sector where two particular sets of conflicting norms are clearly apparent is discussed. Teaching staff in university professional schools inhabit an ambivalent cultural world. Their dual mandate requires commitment to traditional academic norms and scholarship through the disciplines along with commitment to the transmission of distinctly vocational skills and attitudes. Conflicts commonly experienced by teaching staff in the schools of medicine, law, social studies, music, education, and environmental planning at the University of Melbourne are examined. Three sections look at the following: (1) tensions between teaching and research (balancing theory and practice, conflicting ideologies); (2) tensions induced by the influence of the practicing professions on professional schools (courses, divided loyalties involving professional association activity); and (3) tensions between professional schools and nonprofessional fields (involvement in university matters, university ignorance of professional school activity). Findings suggest that university leaders who are mindful of the cultural origins of and are sensitive to the tensions between the conflicting roles are more likely to develop strategies that minimize symbolic separation and ensure the survival and growth of both the academic-scholarly and practice-oriented cultures. Contains 11 references. (Author/SM)

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USING CULTURE TO UNDERSTAND CONFLICT WITHIN A UNIVERSITY: PROFESSIONAL VERSUS ACADEMIC VALUES IN UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA

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Abstract

Teaching staff in university professional schools inhabit an ambivalent cultural world. Their dual mandate requires commitment to traditional academic norms and scholarship through the disciplines on the one hand, and commitment to the transmission of distinctly vocational skills and attitudes on the other. Tensions created by these two intersecting roles both within professional schools and between them and elsewhere in a university, and the organizational implications of these are explored in this paper. Findings suggest that university leaders who are mindful of the cultural origins of and are sensitive to the tensions between these oft conflicting roles are more likely to develop stategies that minimise symbolic separation and ensure the survival and growth of both the academic-scholarly and practice-oriented cultures.

INTRODUCTION

Universities are probably unsurpassed as homes for contested views, contradictions, debate and intellectual conflict. Indeed, they do not merely house them but generate them. It is no surprise that in a milieu where uncertainty thrives, competing ideologies coexist and negotiation over all kinds of matters occurs, conflict is rife and occurs regularly along many different dimensions and in many sectors of universities. Professional schools represent one sector where two particular sets of conflicting norms are clearly apparent and these provide the focus of this paper.

Despite the professional school biases of Australian universities, many Australian academics still cling tenaciously to the Newman-type ideals of a university that emphasise the intrinsic value of learning and scholarship and development of the 'whole person' who seeks knowledge for its own sake regardless of future occupation, even though this goal is seldom, if ever, achieved. This so-called 'mythical' view of the university (Charlesworth, 1987: 4) fails to take account of the plurality of missions typical of the 'real' university which is more likely to produce the 'professional person' in a climate where some norms and goals are in harmony with one another and some clearly are not. In professional schools in particular, where the cultures of scholarly academia and professional, client-oriented practice intersect and inherently conflict, teaching staff are pulled in different directions, constantly attempting to balance tensions which arise between the two. By examining the interplay of academic and professional norms in six professional schools at the University of Melbourne, this paper explores this mythical-real dichotomy and identifies a multiplicity of tensions rife amongst incumbents there and between their schools and non-professional sectors of the University. Those who teach and research in professional schools are balanced precariously between these opposing sub cultures, a position which often

[*]This paper draws on material by the same author entitled, 'Professional Versus Academic Values: Cultural Ambivalence in University Professional Schools in Australia' which will appear in *Higher Education*, Vol.18, No.5, 1989.

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creates for them a culturally ambivalent bind with resultant normative or cultural conflict.[1] Understanding the cultural origins of these tensions and what they might mean in terms of organizational outcomes provide the key focal points.

Within the frameworks of most major research universities, professional schools are located at the intersection of two social institutions, the professions for which they supply specialised knowledge and technical skills, and the university of which they are part.[2] The dual and oft conflicting cultures of the traditional university and the practising professions create tensions for many academics in university professional schools. On the one hand, they share the traditional university values of commitment to scholarship, academic norms and intellectual life[3], while on the other, they are necessarily involved with the transmission of distinctly vocational skills and attitudes for professional practice (Halpern,1987: 305). Close to twenty five years ago, Wallis (1964: 1081) highlighted this basic tension when he observed:

> At the heart of the contemporary university is the traditional university, characterized by an extreme degree of individualism and decentralisation, seeking knowledge for knowledge's sake, and seeking it in lieu of material goods and services rather than as a means of attaining them...Superimposed on this traditional university are many socially important functions...which could not have been provided for satisfactorily had not universities assumed responsibility for them...

Historically in Australian higher education, community stress on the perceived significance of these so-called 'socially important functions' of universities which aim ultimately to produce the professional person, has given rise to the dominant vocational, utilitarian and scientific emphases of our major universities (Bessant, 1978: 6). The presence of large professional schools reflects a vocational-utilitarian bias that is indicative of the instrumental goals which permeate the Australian idea of a university.

Professional schools also make a sizeable impact on the missions, ethos and managerial styles of many universities, even though their significance is largely understated in discussions about the role of universities. Melbourne's medical school in particular, exercises a significant influence on both internal management and outside reputation of the University. In other areas their influence is strongly felt, especially so in terms of both student and staff numbers and budgets. Indeed, of the 1,550 (approximately) teaching and research staff at the University of Melbourne, over sixty per cent are in professional schools, most of whom are in Medicine alone. Further, the recurrent financial budgets for the University of Melbourne's professional schools, the largest of which is Medicine's, far exceed those of the non-professional faculties. In addition, the power professional schools wield in influencing university policy in many areas, is significant. Indeed, out of four key sub-committees of the Academic Board at the University of Melbourne, three were chaired by members of the Medical faculty during the course of this study. It is unfortunate, therefore, that even though they comprise about half the total membership of the academic profession in Australia, academic staff in professional schools receive little attention, often because use of the term 'academic profession' tends to be restricted to members of the traditional humanities, sciences and social science disciplines.

Unlike the smaller, newer, Australian universities that have a limited range of professional schools, the University of Melbourne, Victoria's oldest and most revered, is especially renowned for its strong professional schools and its power to attract top school leavers. It is today one of Australia's twenty three publicly funded universities, it is the most selective of the Victorian universities at the undergraduate level, it ranks highly in terms of amounts of research funding it attracts, and its impact on Australian society is widespread.

Data used here derive from a recent organizational study of academic culture at this university (Harman, 1988) which comprised a systematic analysis of one symbolic dimension of academic organization, the culture

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[1]Cultural conflict which largely reflects the clashes of occupational beliefs and values academics hold, can be analytically differentiated from structural conflict which reflects more the kinds of battles that ensue over scarce resources and areas of control in universities. Structural and cultural dimensions are inextricably linked of course, in that university structures provide the institutional means whereby culturally defined ideals and moral imperatives are upheld and regulated. However, a useful conceptual distinction can nevertheless be made for analytical convenience.

[2]Halpern (1987: 305), in her study of American professional schools, refers to their duality of mission as 'structural ambiguity', a concept borrowed from American sociologist, Donald Light.

[3]These are discussed in terms of an integrating occupational ethos in Harman (1988), Chapter five, 'Culture of the Academic Profession', pp.16-63.

peculiar to senior members of the academic tribe based there. These 'tribal elders' represent the embodiment of a distinctive culture as they contribute to, partake of, protect, manage and sustain particular traditions, myths, university ideals and values and other forms of expressive symbolism that have grown up about universities and the occupational life and work of academics. Inspiration for the analytical framework of the study was provided by Clark's insightful works on academic culture and belief (Clark, 1980; 1983; 1984).

Cultures discernible at different levels of organization were systematically examined -- those of the institution itself, the academic disciplines, professional education and the wider academic profession, structures from which academic belief derives. Unlike organizational structures, organizational cultures are elusive, pervasive and difficult to render intelligible because they cannot be observed. What can be observed or noted, however, are the actions and normative statements of those whose professional lives partake of and help to create these cultures. The cultural analysis applied in this study allowed the researcher to make an in-depth analysis of academic belief and action in real life situations over a protracted period of time. This paper draws on data stemming from the portion of the study directed to examining aspects of the culture pertinent to those whose work was directed to professional education.

Conflicts commonly experienced by teaching staff in the schools of Medicine, Law, Social Studies, Music, Education and, to a limited extent, Environmental Planning at the University of Melbourne are examined here. Tensions between theoretical and practical aspects of what they teach and research, and between their commitment to their research specialities as opposed to their commitment to the overall courses in which they are involved are examined in particular. Interrelationships between the University's professional schools and outside professional groups are also examined after identifying influences exerted by these outside bodies on directions and content of professional courses. Attention is then turned to intra university relations. First, professional staff commitment to the overall University enterprise, as opposed to their research and teaching commitments is examined, followed by an analysis of perceptions about the rest of the University's understanding of what they are trying to achieve in their particular fields.

Of the one hundred and four in-depth interviews that formed the basis of the source material used in the original study, forty of these were with academics in professional fields. It is their beliefs and perceptions that are presented here.

TENSIONS BETWEEN TEACHING AND RESEARCH

1. BALANCING THEORY AND PRACTICE

Courses and Programmes

Professional courses strive to attain some balance between theoretical and practical components. That there should be sound theoretical components in university teaching programmes in professional fields is not disputed by those who teach in these programmes. Indeed, theoretical input is being strengthened all the time, resulting in the continual opening up of new theoretical perspectives in many areas of study. Consensus about theory providing the critical distinction between a mere trade as opposed to a legitimate academic area of study, appears unshakable. What is controversial and strongly contested is the question of what should be the balance between practical and theoretical components of what is taught

For the most part, the issue of balance is related more to the fundamental question of what kind of a product different professional programmes aim to produce. For those involved in these programmes there is no real consensus on this issue. This dilemma was clearly articulated by two senior members of the medical school. The first highlighted the academic-practitioner divide:

> I don't think it's been decided what the product of the medical school should be... Obviously the academic conditions want to produce high-powered academic collusions. But we need to know what really makes a good primary care doctor, especially in terms of how you train them... This is a problem that's been faced by many universities...

The second highlighted the argument over which kind of course model is appropriate:

> ...the faculty is divided over what kind of doctor we should produce. Some people think that medical graduates should be broadly educated with the real training taking place in the post-graduate period (the North

> American model). You could argue that the above proponents would feel that there shouldn't be a 'first port of call' doctor. They would say that if you are going to be this kind of doctor, then you should be trained by the College of General Practitioners than by Medicine...

Tension also exists because of the stigma that is attached to practical components of courses. For instance, those in Education who visit schools and supervise practice teaching and those who teach in the school-based strand of the Diploma of Education (Course B) are considered by their colleagues more remote from educational practice to be intellectually inferior, despite Course B's fundamental aim of integrating theory with practice. Close contact with schools and the operational side of teaching is viewed by the 'theoreticians' as contaminating the true academic enterprise. On the other side of the coin, those related closely to methods and problems of teaching are critical of what they see as the esoteric work of their purist colleagues who are totally removed from the operational side of teaching and schooling. A similar tension exists in the medical school between researchers and practitioners in clinical departments where a great deal of basic research now takes place. Similarly in the performance side of music, where considerable tension exists between those who interpret academic status of courses in theoretical terms and those who see practical elements as vastly undervalued or, in some cases, undermined by the rest of the university. Providing a rationale for keeping practical music in a university, a senior member of the Music Faculty also expressed the uneasy status of music in the University:

> There have always been people suggesting that practical music is not a university discipline...Most criticism comes from scientists and legal people sometimes. The liberal-vocational argument is stronger now because funding is different and music is a good example of this argument. If you only have institutions which dwell on the academic nature of music and not the instrumental side, then you will finish up with very fine and learned music colleges whose students do not play instruments and who can't get a job... There is justification for having practical music. It's like dentistry. It would be laughable to have an academic course in dentistry, for instance. Both dentists and musicians have to perform in public...

Thus, from a discipline-oriented point of view, to be working in courses linked closely to the practice of a profession renders those courses academically non-respectable. Put bluntly, courses that have strong theoretical underpinnings are seen by discipline-based researchers to carry more academic kudos and be more worthy of research than non-theoretical, applied or creative areas of study.

Overall, differences between professional school courses lie in each's separation or integration of 'theoretical' and 'practical'. In the medical school the line between the two is clearly marked by structural differentiation. The first three years of the course are devoted to pre-clinical or more fundamental science (some would argue applied science) and no patient care. The next three years are taught in clinical departments located at major hospitals, with at least one compulsory year of hospital residency to follow in order to meet the requirements of the Medical Registration Board. Music is clearly differentiated into performance, composition, historical and musicological streams. While the law course includes practical components such as operation of the legal system, visits to chambers and experience in mock court sittings, it is commonly believed by Law staff that the real legal trade is only learnt in the year of articles following graduation, when young lawyers get their first files.

In other areas such as Environmental Planning where there is no practicum or 'hands on' experience, and where a research component forms part of the course requirements in the final year, the line between theory and practice is seen to be much more diffuse and artificial. Likewise with some social work courses which have a 'practice theory' orientation where attempts are made to integrate theory relating to actual practice contexts. Tensions exist, however, over how integration is to be achieved and what sort of teaching model should be followed. These are seen to be difficult areas where theories about practice are not well developed, are controversial or where they are seen to have dubious academic status.

Research

A disparate mix of theoretical and applied research is carried out in professional faculties, some of which is discipline-driven, some of which is practice-oriented and some of which manages to integrate both. As with some teaching courses, the line between theoretical and applied research can be very artificial and many professional school staff stress that just because an area of inquiry is practice-oriented or presents a practical problem, this does not mean that it does not raise interesting theoretical problems. Those, for example, who are working in applied areas such as social welfare policy, environmental planning, or educational administration,

borrow heavily from political, sociological, anthropological and economic theories which derive from basic disciplinary fields.

Whatever the emphasis, some academic research is directly related to what academics teach, while other research clearly has no direct link to their teaching programmes at all. This creates another source of friction which relates to belief about the origins and applications of theory. One school of thought believes strongly that, because theory derives from practice and cannot be divorced from experience, research should be directed solely to issues and problems of the professional area represented and have some useful application. Others argue that pure or basic research is not always pursued merely for its own sake and that it is not as detached from real-life situations as people might believe. Rather, it is said to have the capacity to increase understanding of a problem and its implications, to lead to new fields of inquiry and to throw up new advances that have practical application.

Tensions also exist because of a shift over time from researching problems related directly to practice to more fundamental issues stemming from the traditional disciplines. In essence, there is greater emphasis today on theoretical aspects of problems than there was in the past. Indeed, the bulk of research in Medicine today is said to be science-based, even in hospital clinical departments where much fundamental research is done which is characteristically a long way from the patient-doctor interface and often only indirectly related to patient's problems (molecular biological research is a good example). Albeit, some significant advances related to patient problems have come out of clinical departments in teaching hospitals where basic research is done (immunological advances, for example).

The Faculty of Education provides another example of the shift in emphasis from practice-oriented to discipline-driven problems. Except for the school-based strand of the Diploma of Education programme which attempts to integrate theory and practice, there has been a shift over time from problems relating to the practice of teaching to more fundamental educational issues, and staff appointments reflect this trend. In the context of a growing research emphasis and burgeoning specialisation, gone are the days of the 'old school men' like the early education professors at the University. One long-serving Education staff member, ruminating on the tensions that exist between staff over theory and methods in the Diploma of Education programme, and between those who teach in the programme and those who choose not to, expressed the trend towards more fundamental research this way:

> ...There aren't many who regularly visit schools now except those who are attached to Course B...One reason is that the methods people claim they are the ones who know about it, so the others let them... The shift from problems relating to the practice of teaching to more fundamental educational issues is part of the way teachers are trained now. It used to be by apprenticeship where useful skills were learnt... Education became separated from that and naturally moved into a more theoretical arena.

2. CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES

Tensions Underlying Course Planning

Common tensions which arise in planning courses relate to the perceived status of various strands of courses. In the main, ideological differences are played out along the dimensions of 'hard' versus 'soft', new versus old, and social reform considerations versus maintaining the *status quo*. Indeed, it is said that during course reviews where priorities need to be worked out, and whenever there are suggestions for new subjects being included in courses, these dichotomies loom large.

The hard-soft dichotomy is especially evident in Medicine. Those units that are seen to soft are regarded as being so in two particular ways: first, because they are more difficult to define and assess, they do not lend themselves to conventional, didactic teaching techniques (usually meaning large lecture-style in this context); and second, they are seen to be less rigorous in method and more in line with the humanities and social sciences approaches to problems. Behavioural science[4] and the community medicine subjects of epidemiology, social and

[4]Added recently to the curriculum as a separate subject, behavioural science evolved from the name of psychology (once treated as a component of biology in the medical course) to medical psychology, to its present name. Cynics noted that its status was eventually hardened by calling it a science.

preventive medicine and medical sociology[5] are examples of units that fit into the soft category. Because they carry lower academic status, these are the subjects which are said to be the first to suffer the 'squash effect' when new strands of courses are introduced. This naturally causes much anguish to the staff involved in these courses.

That the medical course is heavily geared to the basic sciences creates problems for those who see medicine in a broader social context. A rift between staff involved with traditional strands of the course and those who have a social orientation is clear. For instance, there is argument over appropriateness of student selection procedures for the course. Because the academic backgrounds of the first year student intake are mainly hard in orientation, it is said by those who run socially-oriented courses that these new students are generally critical of what they see as 'soft options', and thus they tend to stay with hard subjects which tend to narrow their human and social perspective. Related arguments ensue over what kind of a medical school teaching model is most appropriate, one that is simultaneously rigorous and accommodating of broadening student outlook. Although these issues have been argued at length in Medicine, there is no real consensus on either.

Law too, has its doctrinal differences expecially over the extent to which issues of social and political concern should feature in course units. Despite its basically conservative curriculum, law does have a critical element built into its academic programme but tension exists over what represents acceptable grounds of criticism (of government legislation, for example). A senior member of the law faculty pointed out, for instance, that the problem of what is an intellectually acceptable ground of criticism could well be different to a politically acceptable one, and that this can cause considerable tension between liberal and conservative views.

Other ideological tensions which arise in course planning relate to a greatly expanded knowledge base which, in turn, poses dilemmas in terms of deciding what to include, what to compress and what to remove from programmes. Progressive and conservative forces meet headlong in a new versus old debate, and fights over shared resources ensue. New offerings are seen as decidedly suspicious by reactionaries who are not convinced of their academic acceptability, while others feel threatened by a possible loss of students and, consequently, funding which derives from a formula related to number of student contact hours.

Tensions also arise when some areas expand more rapidly than others, especially if they have an applied or practical emphasis. The educational administration group in Education, for instance, has expanded rapidly in response to demand for their courses and this is resented, especially by some in educational foundations where the worry is not only about the applied emphasis of the new group, but also the diminishing number of students in their own courses.

Research Focus Versus Overall Programme Commitment

In the main, academics in professional schools think more in terms of their own specialty than they do about the overall programme in which they are involved. They commonly believe that it is very difficult for them to grasp a global view of the course, unless they are involved with curriculum review committees. Indeed, because they typically think so much in terms of their particular specialty and therefore find it hard to relate to colleagues' interests, tensions often arise over resultant lack of integration and fragmentation within courses. Social studies is a case in point, as one of its senior members illustrated:

> People here think very much in terms of their own specialty. In fact, one of my criticisms of the course and the organization of the department is that there is little integration at the level of thinking and rationalisation of connections between things... there are sub-departments within sub-departments. 'A' streamers are concerned about the perceived inadequacies of the 'B' stream part of the course and sees itself as having a sense of responsibility for the overall plan. But some hope of achieving a mystical union, I think everyone has given up on as being just too difficult, even impossible. We used to talk a lot about integration, but it is very difficult to achieve.

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5 It is of interest that the recently established department of community medicine exists separately from the rest of the Medical Faculty on an off campus location. It handles a range of subjects taught to students in their fifth year, subjects which had once been handled by hospital clinical departments, as well as medical sociology and social and preventive medicine which is taught in first and third years respectively.

TENSIONS INDUCED BY THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRACTISING PROFESSIONS ON PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

1. COURSES

Through their professional schools, universities are jointly degree granting bodies for particular awards and major providers of professional qualifications for practice. In most fields, it is the university degree which enables graduates to act in a professional capacity in fields such as law, teaching, engineering, veterinary science or medicine. Because universities act as certifying agencies for the professions, their courses need to be closely aligned to outside professional requirements. However, because they guard their autonomy so jealously, universities are especially notorious for their distaste of being dictated to by outside bodies. Thus, if these outside bodies are not happy with particular aspects of courses, any attempt by them to make universities toe the line creates tension.

Formal links of various kinds exist between most of the University's professional schools and the professions for which they prepare students. Members of outside professional bodies are represented on faculty committees, and graduating students must meet the requirements of the appropriate professional bodies before they can practice. A direct link also exists through accreditation of courses by professional bodies. So, in theory at least, these bodies can exercise considerable control over university courses.

To what extent outside professional bodies are seen by academic staff to control or influence university curricula is an important question. A common observation of the practice-oriented is that there is seldom any direct influence brought to bear, and that the University of Melbourne has largely resisted outside control, remaining 'pretty impermeable'. Nevertheless, in some areas where members of staff are engaged in professional practice and are active in outside professional bodies, accrediting agencies and the like, their 'two-hat' status cements informal links that are pervasive and influential. In one of Melbourne's teaching hospitals a medical professor explained the nature of the kinds of informal links created by the overlap of university staff on outside professional bodies:

> The influence cuts both ways. The past president of the College of Physicians was a professor of medicine and then became a full-time researcher at the Howard Florey Institute. The current president is a professor of medicine. A large number of the councillors [of the medical colleges] are professors of medicine, and people who work on the Board of Examiners are full-time university people... The continuing education programmes offered by the colleges often emphasize things that are fed back into the medical school structure. For example, in the gastroenterological area, knowledge about colon cancer was found to be unrealistic in society. That was fed back through the Gastroenterological Society to the University of Melbourne and this has had some bearing on the teaching programmes... often the same individuals are wearing different hats -- college and university...Their influence is very important at the post-graduate level because the colleges and the University both run post-graduate programmes and often the same individuals are asked to speak at each...it becomes difficult in terms of ones's affiliations sometimes...

As in Medicine, the two-hat status of some practising academic lawyers can exercise considerable influence on curriculum content. Through their joint roles as members of Law's Curriculum Review Committee and of outside bodies such as the Victorian Bar, the Law Institute and the Council of Legal Education[6], they can have informal input. The requirements of the Council of Legal Education which prescribes the subjects for the practice of law in Victoria, are an important consideration, though it is said that the impact of this body is now less than it used to be, for a couple of reasons. First, the growth of Law's academic staff has lessened the impact of the legal profession; and, second, there is now less domination from this body because it has fewer members on the Faculty Board than it once had.

Control from outside is seen by academics to retard change. In the main, they complain that too much 'downtown' input means too much outside control of and too little flexibility in syllabus options. If only the subjects the professions prescribe were taught, unnecessary rigidity would result and change would become too

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[6]This body has representation from Supreme Court judges, the Law Institute, the Bar Council and academics from the University of Melbourne and Monash University.

difficult to effect, it is claimed. Offering his observation on the relationship between outside control and rate of change in university syllabuses, a senior lecturer in law, who is also a practising lawyer, had this to say:

> When I was on the working party of the Assembly, [we] looked at how curricula changed: how do outside professionals control change? We looked at engineering, law, education and medical faculties and found that there was an enormous retardation of change through the professions in those professional faculties (these are in the 1973 Report)...there was always trouble from the professions...

This tendency for built-in conservatism because of outside influence, renders professional faculties different to other faculties in the University, a factor which sometimes creates tensions between professional and non-professional sectors of the University.

In addition, university professional school courses are typically seen by outside professionals to be removed from the world of practice, too theoretical and quite radical in orientation. Many academic lawyers, for example, tend to believe that the legal profession's entrenched conservative view of the University law school is that it has deteriorated because of the way the law course is now taught (the teaching of law was once carried out largely by members of the legal profession) and that those on the law school staff who are engaged in outside practice are 'dangerous radicals'. Because of these kinds of perceptions, relations between the professions and the University can be very strained at times.

2. DIVIDED LOYALTIES INVOLVING PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITY

Overall, there is a distinct divide between discipline-driven and practice-oriented academic staff in terms of their membership of and participation in outside professional bodies. The latter typically belong to bodies representing outside professional practice and many are on the governing councils of these bodies, whereas the former typically belong to disciplinary bodies that best represent their research interests.

Because the boundaries between fundamental and practical research are so distinct in Medicine, these differentiated membership patterns are perhaps best exemplified here. In the pre-clinical departments, where there is a small proportion of medically qualified staff, membership of professional medical bodies is minimal. Academic staff here mostly belong to the disciplinary associations in the basic sciences in which they teach and research. In the clinical departments, on the other hand, academic staff are typically active in a diverse range of medical professional bodies and are closely tied to their specialist colleges. The more active senior staff tend to believe that there is a need to maintain strong affiliations with the medical profession but they consequently have less time available to spend on University affairs. According to a professor of surgery in one of the University's teaching hospitals, there are very good reasons for this:

> ...participation in professional activities ... I believe, is absolutely essential for professional clinical academics. If you cut yourself off from the professional environment, you lose stimulus, you lose respect to some extent...of your professional colleagues... Also, people like me with particular interests and skills have a role to play in professional bodies. It cuts both ways.

Two particular kinds of tensions rooted in the discipline-practice divide are discernible here. The first is that practice-oriented academics are seen to be far too involved with their professional interests to pay much attention to the University's interests. This perceived lack of interest, often interpreted as arrogance (especially in the medical school), is a source of annoyance to many within and outside professional schools in the University. The second kind of tension relates to the age-old liberal-vocational dichotomy in universities, where anything vocationally orientated is seen by many to have a resounding dissonance with academic norms.

TENSIONS BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS AND NON-PROFESSIONAL FIELDS

1. INVOLVEMENT IN UNIVERSITY MATTERS

With the exception of deans, heads of departments and some professors, low involvement by professional school academics on University committees and University affairs is common. The law school is better represented than other professional schools on University committees, and this is said to be because, when

Sir David Derham (one-time law professor) was Vice-Chancellor, he convinced people that each major University committee needed a lawyer.

In the medical school physical location of clinical departments away from the central campus, some participation by their staff on various hospital committees and involvement of clinicians on committees of the professional colleges, are three factors which contribute to low participation of staff in University matters. Indeed, many senior staff in Medicine say that they simply cannot spare the time to attend meetings of the Academic Board and that they tend to 'get locked into their own worlds'. Others say they simply do not consider University involvement worth their time. However, on the occasions when their school is under threat or when there is a need to protect its interests, solidarity can be the order of the day. In terms of their voting power, they can exert a formidable influence indeed when the majority of their Academic Board members attend its meetings.

For those in Medicine who are heavily involved in laboratory-type research, especially those who have attracted substantial outside research grants, a real dilemma is posed in terms of how much involvement in University affairs there should be. Too much can be detrimental to pursuing high quality research and this dilemma was illustrated by a chairman of a pre-clinical medical department:

> There are those who are fiercely introverted and egocentric, and they will really do nothing about anything in their environment except in their own four walls. And they're usually very successful in the sense of getting research money and recognition.
> There are others who've got a very strong reference to the organization of the University as a whole and are quite interested in it. Inevitably, their reputation within their own department, or if they are only interested in the teaching aspects of their own department...actually suffers, very much actually -- nationally and scientifically. And those people feel it, I can tell you...they get absolutely no recognition for doing it.
> You price yourself out of the market for chairs and you put yourself out of the market for big research grant money. It happens very quickly...The moment you start to do something other than spending all your spare time in the lab, then people start to talk and it gets through the system. The country is so small...
> Unless you've got particular influence in some way... For instance, our dean maintains a research lab which is well funded, but that's because he's in a particular position to be able to do it. He is able to employ good people to keep it going. But the average staff member who dares to become involved in something other than his research, plus very limited teaching, is in trouble with the granting agencies. I think that is an important point.

The stakes for some therefore, are clearly too high to get involved in University-wide matters. It is no wonder then, that senior members of the medical school actively discourage junior members to stay out of University affairs and take measures to protect them. Altruism would need to be strong indeed to be able to break this cycle. However, lack of engagement in University affairs can create strained relations between these non-participators and active participators who often see the loyalties of their colleagues as being misplaced and blame arrogance and apathy for their non-participation.

2. UNIVERSITY IGNORANCE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL ACTIVITY

Professional school staff commonly believe that others in the University have little understanding of what they do. In turn, unless they are or have been on Faculty Boards other than their own, or their teaching interests transcend professional school boundaries, or they have worked in other Faculties or Schools, their understanding of what actually happens in the rest of the University is also limited. Perceptions about the kind of understanding the rest of the University have about what members of particular professional schools actually do and what kind of image they portray, are very important. Ascribed status differences and pecking orders tend to show up particularly clearly.

Many in Medicine commonly believe that the rest of the University is critical, cynical, envious and 'quietly aggressive' towards the medical school. Criticism is said to be aimed at its comparatively large size, the lack of participation of its members in University affairs and the fact that clinical education is located in hospitals away from the main campus. Cynicism is discernible because of the overwhelming voting power of

its members on the Academic Board, because of the power of its dean and because of perceived domination of the medical profession. Envy is believed to derive from its prestige, the fact that its first year student intake represents the cream of school leavers in Victoria, and because it does so well in the University in getting what it wants. In addition, its staff are usually seen to be getting more than their fair share in the way of new buildings and other resources (for example, the new medical building had priority over the new physics and zoology buildings). Finally, that medically qualified people get special salary loadings earning more than other colleagues, creates further ill feeling. A reader and chairman of department in one of the pre-clinical departments spoke for many when he said:

> The Medical Faculty is such a big faculty and takes so much of the resources of the University. We are envied because we have such a large voting power on the Academic Board -- all the professors and elected chairmen. So, if the Medical Faculty wants to win an argument, it has no problems...
> Actually, I wouldn't like to be an academic in the Science Faculty... I would feel threatened by the Medical Faculty. When the physicists are on about purchasing a really expensive item...perhaps a million dollars or so, they have problems with the Medical Faculty because we're always in for something similar. I suspect the Medical Faculty gets a better deal out of it than the physical sciences...I think they suffer because of the Medical Faculty in terms of their research needs...
> The bulk of academics would feel envious and quietly aggressive about this place. The Vice-Chancellor probably feels it most as our dean is probably the most powerful academic around the place by nature of being head of the Faculty of Medicine...[He] gets a few headaches out of the Medical Faculty...

Any Faculty could be just as successful as Medicine's, given similar factors relating to size, amount of resources, power, quality of students, links with a prestige profession and kudos in the wider community, is a critique believed to be commonly aimed at the medical school. However, this is also seen to be tempered by a grudging admiration for and a quiet pride in the school's outstanding research achievements and acknowledgement of the 'aura' effect of Medicine in terms of benefit to the rest of the University.

University understanding of Architecture and Building and, in particular, the School of Environmental Planning, is regarded by staff there as negligible owing to others' basic ignorance about Planning and how it has developed as a legitimate area of study. Implications of this situation for getting funds for research projects are clear, as a senior member of Environmental Planning pointed out:

> ...I honestly don't think there is any understanding. There are many reasons for that. A common view of architecture is that architects don't really know how to design houses and buildings.
> People haven't got the first idea about what Planning is all about. They think it is training to colour in maps and zones. There is no consideration of what planners do and how they makes decisions... planners have to be brokers, midwives, facilitators, communicators of knowledge and ideas between different parties...
> they need to know what the law is and should be good politicians, and know about groups and conflict and the like. This would not be understood by, say, a chemist or a medico. Most people don't know what happens outside their own Faculty...
> The area does not fit into a neat category for getting grants...there is no understanding because you are standing halfway between a social scientist or psychologist and a person who will show you what you want to do with the resource, the engineer-type...the bases of Environmental Planning is very hard to get support for...

Education regards itself as having 'the ugly sister' image in the University. Its staff widely believe that education is not understood as a discipline, and they are not impressed with what others profess to know about it. Consequently, the school believes itself to be 'a fair way down the pecking order' in the University. Apart from the lowly status that is usually ascribed to university schools of education, one of the chief reasons for this image is thought to stem from the fact that it once functioned as a very practice-oriented teachers' college and that this image has lingered. Commenting on the comparative image of education, a long-serving senior lecturer had this to say:

> I don't think people in the University as a whole, understand the professional training courses at all, whether it be Social Work, or Medicine, or any of these things. They forget that such a major part of the University is geared to professional training...
> Medicine is at the top of the power structure doing exactly what it likes. Education was always just tacked on [to the University] as a sort of teachers' college...
> Some people would like to throw education out...

On the whole, staff in Law believe that the rest of the University regards their school as being controlled by the legal profession and that any understanding others might have of it would be fortuitous. Also, because they are a cheap faculty to run (classes tend to be very large, very few tutorials and elective courses are provided, and no sophisticated, expensive hardware is necessary), Law staff believe that their needs often get ignored by the powers-that-be, and that they do not fare well in resource allocation compared with others. They also sense antagonism from others ('those damn lawyers' is a common accusation). One factor believed to contribute to negative attitudes is that those who practise at the Bar need chambers which are very costly, so they must be away practising quite a lot. This creates tension and jealousy and there is much criticism from non-practising staff within the Law school and from others outside about abuse of the system by colleagues who spend so much time out of the University earning an additional and often substantial income.

Teaching staff in Music refer to their Faculty's 'long and turbulent history' in trying to win academic respectability in the University. To some extent, Music's problems were partially solved in the early 1970s when the Victorian College of the Arts was set up and the Conservatorium of Music moved from the campus. This separated off much of the performance element which had been a major source of discontent. Music staff claim that there have always been those on campus who consider that the practice element of music should not be counted as a *bona fide* university discipline, a situation that has created much unhappiness and anguish for those engaged mainly in performance. On the other hand, despite its perceived dubious academic status, music is typically seen to be 'good to have on campus' because it represents a valued element of 'high culture'.

Being governed by a Board of Studies rather than having the status of a Faculty ('an anachronism that has to be wiped off the University', according to one of its members), does little for the embattled image of the department of Social Studies whose members believe that nobody in the rest of the University really understands them at all. Common criticisms aimed at them are said to be that they are too practice-oriented, their work lacks strong theoretical underpinnings derived from the basic disciplines, and their lesser qualified staff spend too little time on serious scholarly research. Isolation from the rest of the University is felt strongly, and the physical location in a refurbished terrace across the road from the main campus which symbolises and reinforces this detachment, does little to appease this situation.

While sympathising somewhat with the sense of isolation, a senior member of the Social Studies staff ruminated on the other side of the same coin. In a reflective mood, he critically examined the comparatively tender age of their field of study and claimed that isolationism is, in part, self inflicted. He had this to say:

> The predominant flavour of this department has been isolationist and it has been structurally somewhat isolated within the University. It has the perception of being embattled and has developed a sort of fortress mentality which has left it paradoxically isolated from both the University and the field [of social work]...
> A number of the staff would not see [involvement outside their department] as relevant because the majority view would be that the University is pretty irrelevant...It identifies as a professional school and it wants to be seen as not part of the University, but just a professional school in isolation...
> You need to look at the age of the discipline and the fact that, up until ten years ago, it was unusual for staff to have masters degrees, much less PhDs, which doesn't help matters much at the intra-university level. That may be one reason it encourages isolation, in defence of this.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

A cultural view revealing the extant or 'as-it-really-is' situation has special value in not only highlighting the heterogeneity and internally differentiated nature of universities, but in particular, understanding the bases of conflict within a university. In university professional schools in particular, a cultural analysis is able to highlight the uniqueness of these institutions in terms of their precarious position between intersecting cultures, and to elucidate the nature of tensions that arise as a result of conflicting cultural norms.

Renowned for its strong professional schools, the University of Melbourne is seen to be typical of the older, major Australian capital city universities, marked by a plurality of missions and a dominant emphasis on the vocational, scientific and utilitarian fields of study. This is not to suggest that the Newman-scholarly university ideals are not alive and well there. It is merely a reminder that opposing sets of values and guiding principles comprise its cultural milieu and this is not always acknowledged in discussions about universities in Australia.

This is especially evident in the University's professional schools where the intersecting and often conflicting norms of traditional academia and professional, client-oriented practice create for incumbents a culturally ambivalent bind riven with a multiplicity of tensions. Theoretical vie with practical interests, discipline-directedness runs counter to vocationally-geared orientations, intrinsic interests oppose professional relevance, specialisms vie with commitment to overall teaching programmes, liberal oppose social and vocational goals, and academic autonomy fights against externally imposed control. Discipline-directed academics typically view any commitment to client-oriented practice and the development of technical skills as counter to scholarly ideals and intellectually stultifying because of their utilitarian bias. The further they distance themselves from involvement in vocational, 'hands-on' work, the greater they believe their academic status to be. Perceived domination from the outside professions and time spent away from the University in professional practice does little to appease tension between the opposing groups. Practice-oriented staff, on the other hand, are critical of basic research that has no practical relevance and the arrogance with which the theoreticians hold their views.

What then can be made of the normative conflict inherent in professional schools studied here? Does it adversely affect the functioning of the University? What implications of the Newman ideals and the scholarly culture of academia are evident for professional training in universities and what key issues need to be faced?

Although tensions in the professional schools explored here symbolically separate staff, they do not appear to be wholly pathological. On the contrary, they represent the very essence of a strong research university where a ferment of intellectual conflict produces high level scholarship. An institution like the University of Melbourne is at once able to present itself to the world as a unity, while at the same time harbouring a most extraordinary internal diversity of styles, interests, perceptions of values, priorities and modes of work. Indeed, that its professional schools reflect such heterogeneity, internal differentiation and conflict, reinforces images of universities as loosely coupled, organized anarchies (Weick,1976:1-19; Cohen and March,1974:3) where conflict is accepted as a norm, as opposed to the frequently portrayed image of them as consensus-bound collegiums. Indeed, the University of Melbourne represents the very essence of a strong research university which asserts that enrichment and high level scholarship stem from its diversity.

The nature and importance of the research culture was certainly stressed by participants in this study. Research, the hallmark of the university stamp, demands considerable theoretical input and it is this element which is seen to ultimately differentiate professional training from trades. The university stamp is also seen to give greater academic legitimacy, better scope for research and a higher status to professional areas of study.

Emphasis on research however, might possibly have detrimental effects on the functioning of the University. It is argued by critics of universities and some outside professions, for example, that graduates of colleges of advanced education are better able to cope with professional demands immediately after they graduate. This provides grounds, they often argue, for separating off professional training into single-purpose institutions. Universities usually reply to such criticism by claiming that such a move would not only have serious and damaging ramifications for universities, but that the longer term view of training that universities have is more desirable.

Other possible detrimental effects of the scholarly research culture on the functioning of the University are discernible. Promotion of staff, for example, is basically on research performance, a practice which symbolically divides researchers from their practice-oriented colleagues. Barriers thus created make for uneasy relationships between colleagues. Emphasis on research also creates barriers between those whose interests lie in overall teaching programmes as opposed to those with single-minded interests in research. Any lack of concern for students by the latter not only has adverse consequences for students, but causes tension amongst colleagues.

In addition, because research leads to an expanded knowledge base which means greater specialisation, difficulties arise in trying to integrate course strands and in choosing what strands to include and what to leave out when revamping courses. These sorts of changes often lead to strained relations between the University and the outside professions who exercise considerable influence on course content.

Lack of integration between and proliferation of sub fields and courses are not surprising in the light of three shifting patterns of emphasis in universities -- the move from practitioner-based to discipline-directed research work, the growth of the PhD culture and the move from generalist to specialist areas. Consequently in professional schools, with the exception of some medical practitioners in clinical departments, a new breed of academics has emerged who are more infused with the academic ethos and less with the norms of the practising profession they represent. Commenting on the changed nature of legal scholarship and the subsequent rise of the new breed of 'legal academics', a reader in Law, himself a practising barrister, provided a historical perspective in order to elucidate this trend:

> ...legal scholarship is changing. We need to look at the way law was taught in this country. It tended to consist of mainly one or two legal academics who were full-time, and a lot of outsiders who were engaged in part-time teaching. That was true right up until the early 1960s. We had a faculty of about three, I think, in 1950 -- three full-timers.
> Now the profession of a legal academic is coming to be recognised as a separate professional skill, a separate part of the legal profession [for those based in universities still practising law]. But the consequence of that is that the age of the generalist is disappearing. I think most of our people would regard themselves as specialists...

Another difficulty which causes ill-feeling is that for some in professional schools who attract large outside grants, the stakes are simply too high to opt out of research in order to have time to get involved in University affairs. Antagonism is especially directed towards Medicine which has so much power in influencing directions in the University.

Implications of tensions and symbolic separation in professional schools are many for leaders in universities who, by definition, are managers of conflict. How to exercise sensitive judgment in managing conflict is a constant dilemma for them. Given that universities thrive on conflict and dissent, it might be beneficial to explore how effective leaders manage to strike a balance or make comprises between conflicting interests. Those, for instance, who are aware of potentially dysfunctional conflict are more likely to be able to develop mechanisms that can successfully defuse hazardous situations before thay erupt into open warfare. Awareness of and sensitivity to such issues as how much to influence decisions regarding recruitment and promotion of staff when arguments ensue over how much emphasis to place on research competence as opposed to practical experience of candidates, or the extent to which attempts to curb proliferation of courses should be made, or the rate at which change might be implemented in the light of inbuilt conservatism in professional schools, seem likely to ensure more positive outcomes in trying to balance professional with academic values.

Another challenge for university leaders is to ensure both the scholarly-academic and the practice-oriented cultures survive and flourish, as the success of professional schools ultimately depends on their survival. Understanding the cultural origins of their differences might be a vital first step in supporting and sustaining the scholarly enterprise, as well as catering adequately to the needs of the outside professions.

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